



# **TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

## *Forensic Services Division*

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### **Evidence Unit Standard Operating Procedures Manual**

#### **Entering Information into the LIMS System**

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#### **4.0 Entering Information Into the LIMS system:**

4.1 Information from the Request Form will be entered into LIMS as soon as possible.

#### **4.2 Original Submission:**

All Cases submitted to the crime lab will be given a unique laboratory case number provided by the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). Once all pertinent information has been entered into LIMS, a barcoded label must be generated for each piece of evidence and a folder will be created for each laboratory case. Folders will be color-coded based upon the laboratory case number. The case folder color will be changed every thousand cases. Folders will be labeled with the unique laboratory case number.

#### **4.3 Additional Evidence:**

If LIMS indicates that the agency case number is already in the system, verify that the offense date and individuals in the case are the same as listed on the Request Form. The evidence may be considered additional to the existing case if these are the same.

When possible, the Forensic Technician who originally received the initial evidence will continue to take in the additional evidence so the chain-of-custody remains limited. "Additional Evidence" will be written under the lab case number on the Request Form.

If the additional evidence is to be worked by a unit that previously had a request present, it can be added to that request only if the request is not in "Draft Complete, Tech Review, or Admin Review". If any one of these is present, a new request must be added.

The unit to be analyzing the evidence, the laboratory number, the date the evidence is received, and initials/name of the Forensic Technician receiving the evidence will be written on the outer packaging of every item submitted to the laboratory. The date of receipt, the exhibit number, and the name of the Forensic Technician receiving the evidence may be contained on the barcode affixed to the outer packaging of the evidence and need not be hand written. "Add'l Evid" will be written under the markings.



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If the evidence previously submitted was single section and a different unit will examine the additional evidence being submitted, the case becomes multi-section. The markings on the previously submitted evidence must be changed to multi-section (MS).

If the evidence previously submitted was multi-section and all evidence has been returned to the agency, the additional evidence becomes a single section case. Single section markings will be placed on the evidence.

#### **4.4 Resubmittals:**

Evidence that is resubmitted should be received in its original packaging with the TBI evidence seals unbroken. If the evidence is not in its original packaging (i.e. biohazard), this will be noted on the Request Form.

When possible, the Forensic Technician who originally received the evidence will also take in the resubmitted evidence so the chain-of-custody remains limited. "Resubmittal" will be written under the lab number on the Request Form.

The unit to be analyzing the evidence, the laboratory number, the date the evidence is received, and initials of the Forensic Technician receiving the evidence will be added on the packaging of every item resubmitted to the laboratory. "Resubmittal" will be written under the markings. If the evidence was formerly a multi-section case and the evidence being resubmitted is for single section testing only, then single section markings will be added to each piece of evidence.

#### **4.5 Multi-Section Evidence:**

Evidence submitted to be analyzed by more than one unit will be considered multi-section cases. When the Forensic Technician places their markings on the evidence, "MS" will be used to indicate that it is a multi-section case.

The original paperwork will be kept in Evidence Receiving in the master file. Copies of the Request Form will be sent to the appropriate unit in manila folders. Once testing is complete, each unit's manila folder will be consolidated into the master file.

#### **4.6 Single Section Cases with Toxicology Only:**



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Cases involving blood evidence for Toxicology and evidence for only one other unit of the laboratory will be marked as a single section case. All tubes and/or containers received that are listed as having been drawn from the same victim/subject will each be given the same exhibit number regardless of the amount of containers received.

Proper markings will be placed on the evidence. A manila folder will be created for each unit analyzing the evidence. The manila folder for the Toxicology Unit will contain a copy of the Request Form and the original Alcohol/Toxicology request form. The manila folder for any other unit associated with the case will contain a copy of the Request Form. The original Request Form will be placed in a master file to be kept in the Evidence Receiving Unit.

Place the evidence in the proper area of the PEV for storage until which time a Forensic Scientist requests it for testing.

**If Toxicology and only one other unit of the laboratory will be testing the same item of evidence (i.e. moonshine) and all of the evidence will be returned to the agency, then it will be considered a multi-section case.**

#### **4.7 Forensic Biology With Toxicology Cases:**

Cases involving blood evidence for Forensic Biology and Toxicology will be marked as a single section case. The liquid blood evidence will not be removed from the package. Blood evidence will be described in the evidence screen as "Known blood sample from \_\_\_\_\_." The evidence should be forwarded to the Forensic Biology Unit first. The Forensic Biology analyst will be responsible for contacting a representative from the Toxicology Unit as to when the liquid blood evidence will be transferred to a representative in the Toxicology Unit.

Since the blood swatch must be placed back into the original package or new manila envelope to be returned to the requesting agency, the analyst will first place the swatch in a zip lock bag. The package will receive a proper seal before being transferred back to the Evidence Receiving Unit for proper storage in the PEV.

A barcode sticker made for the blood swatch will be placed on the outside of the package for transfer purposes by the analyst.

#### **4.8 Additional Evidence or Resubmittals for Lab Numbers Prior to 2001:**



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Lab numbers prior to 2001 are not in the current LIMS system. If additional evidence or resubmitted evidence is received for cases prior to 2001, first locate the folder. If the evidence has not been previously submitted in the case, a new exhibit number will be assigned regardless of the date of offense.

Once the folder is located, look at the previous Request Forms to determine if the items have previously been submitted. If so, the same exhibit number will be assigned. If the evidence has not previously been submitted, a new exhibit number will be given to the item.

Enter all information into the LIMS system. When entering the evidence information on the Evidence screen, tab to "Evidence Number." Here the evidence number can be manually changed to the exhibit number given. For cases prior to 2004, the packaging will not be described. The exhibit number will be given directly to the item being tested.

- 4.9** In the event LIMS is down, the chain-of-custody record will be hand written on approved forms (See Appendix I thru L). When the computer system regains function, the hand written chain-of-custody will be added to the electronic record in LIMS. The hand written record will be retained in the original case file.